



Friends of Toppenish Creek

June 7, 2022

Board of Directors
Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency
186 Iron Horse Court, Suite 101
Yakima, WA. 98901

To the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency Board of Directors:

Three minutes is not enough time to explain to the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency Board of Directors why the Friends of Toppenish Creek do not have confidence in the YRCAA 2023 proposed budget. So, we will communicate by email. Thank you for reading.

The Friends of Toppenish Creek sent the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency questions regarding the agency's 2023 budget in mid-May. We did not receive answers, but we see that answers are posted in the YRCAA June Board Packet. Some of the answers are inadequate:

Q: "What is the rationale for the increased expenditure for professional services?"

A: Due to increased legal fees rates, and software cost, inflation etc.

R. In 2014 the YRCAA spent \approx \$110,000 for services. The 2023 budget allocates \approx \$220,000 for services. A doubling of expenditures in nine years deserves further justification. Are legal fees the main reason for this increase? What is the agency doing to comply with the law and reduce legal fees?

Q: "It appears that the number of staff assigned to wood stove change-out has more than doubled. Salaries and benefits went from \$60,000 to \$140,000. Explanation?"

A: That is because we received the grant late last year, it is the anticipated amount for the rest of the grant.

R: What does this mean? Are you saying that salaries for the woodstove change out program were paid from other accounts in 2021 and now that money will be paid back into those accounts under the salary allocations? Do not expect the public to guess about your answer.

Q: "There is a \$38,000 decrease in salaries and benefits for base operations? Explanation?"

A: Some of the salaries will go to woodstove and other work.

R: Does this mean that staff will spend more time on the woodstove changeout program? Does this mean that money borrowed from the base operations account for woodstove changeout salaries will now be paid back? Does this mean something else entirely? It would help to include a table with *Resource Allocation – Salaries by Work Program* in the proposed budget as the agency did in prior draft budgets.

Q: “What is the reason for expecting higher than normal revenues from minor sources?”

A: Due to increase in fees.

R: There is no fee schedule, increased or not, in the 2023 YRCAA budget.

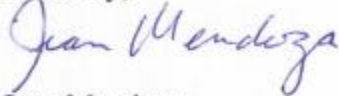
Q: “Is it possible to calculate cost per public education event, cost per odor investigation, cost per dust investigation, and make comparisons by year?”

A: The answer is yes it is possible, everything is possible, but at what expense and what benefit.

R: FOTC asked this question because these are services that are important to the community. Are they costly? Why are they frequently not performed?

People do not complain about odor and dust lightly. We complain when odor and dust impact our health. This means that air quality is poor. The YRCAA should provide good reasons for not performing this part of your mission.

Sincerely,



Jean Mendoza

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